REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action dated October 3, 2006. Because this response is filed on April 3, 2007 with a three-month extension of time and a Request for Continued Examination, the amendment is timely filed and shall be considered.

I. Status of the Amendments

Prior to this amendment, claims 1-3, 14-21, 34-39, and 41 were pending. By this amendment, claims 1, 3, 14, 16, 17, 19, 34, 36, 39, 41 have been amended. Consequently, claims 1-3, 14-21, 34-39, and 41 remain pending.

II. Response to March 6 Office Action

Claims 1-3, 14-20, 34-37, 39, and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Walker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,077,163). Claims 21 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as allegedly unpatentable over Walker et al. in view of Lott (U.S. Patent No. 5,851,011). Applicants respond as follows.

Claim 1, as amended, recites a gaming method including receiving a value amount to initially define a value total, and causing a video image representing a game to be generated. The video image represents one of the following games: video poker, video blackjack, video slots, video keno and video bingo. The video image includes an image of at least five playing cards if the game comprises video poker, the video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels if the game comprises video slots, an image of a plurality of playing cards if the game comprises video blackjack, an image of a plurality of keno numbers if the game comprises video keno, and an image of a bingo grid if the game comprises video bingo. The method also includes deducting a fee at a plurality of intervals from the value total during a gaming session, the intervals being independent of play of the game represented by the video image and independent of input from a player, determining based on the fee a value payout associated with an outcome of the game represented by the video image, and adding the value payout to the value total.

In particular, the method includes deducting a fee at a plurality of intervals from the value total during a gaming session, the intervals being independent of play of the game represented by the video image and independent of input from a player. By contrast, Walker discusses payment of a single fee for a gaming session. For this reason alone, then, Walker does not anticipate claim 1.

Further, because claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, the rejection of these claims should also be withdrawn. As shown above, Walker does not anticipate claim 1. Because claim 1 is not anticipated and claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, Walker does not, at least for this reason, anticipate claims 2 and 3. Thus, the rejections of claims 2 and 3 should be withdrawn.

However, in addition to its dependence from claim 1, applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 separately distinguishes Walker in that claim 3 recites "interrupting for a period of time the deducting of a fee at a plurality of intervals from the value total . . ." Applicants submit that Walker states that a single payment is made, not a series of deductions. Once the payment is made, according to Walker, play continues until the player cashes out. Applicants believe that there is no discussion in Walker of an interrupt to the deductions, as the payment (allegedly corresponding to the recited deductions) has already been made at one time in full.

As for independent claims 14, 17, 34, 39, and 41, it has been shown that each of these claims is similar to claim 1 in regard to the limitations particular noted above and relied upon to distinguish Walker. While claims 14, 17, 34, 39, and 41 may differ from claim 1 (and each other) in other regards, because of the similarity of the claims in regard to the limitation particularly noted above, the arguments made above relative to claim 1 apply with equal force to claims 14, 17, 34, 39, and 41. As such, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

As to dependent claims 15, 16, 18-21, and 35-38, because these claims depend from one of claims 14, 17, or 34, the rejection of these claims should also be withdrawn. As shown above, Walker does not anticipate claims 14, 17 or 34. Because claims 14, 17, and 34 are not anticipated, claims 15, 16, 18-21, and 35-38 depend from one of claims 14, 17 or 34, and because the rejections of claims 15, 16, 18-21, and 35-38 are based on the anticipation of claims 14, 17, or 34 by Walker, Walker does not, at least for this reason, anticipate or render

obvious claims 15, 16, 18-21, and 35-38. Thus, the rejections of claims 15, 16, 18-21, and 35-38 should be withdrawn.

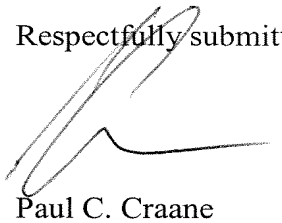
Additionally, applicants note the similarities between claims 3, 16, 19, and 36, in that all of these claims recite an interrupt to the deductions of a fee at a plurality of intervals from the value total during a gaming session. As noted above, Walker does not disclose, teach or suggest this limitation. Therefore, for reasons similar to those provided above relative to claim 3, applicants submit that claims 16, 19 and 36 are allowable.

Finally, applicants wish to reply to certain statements made in the Response to Arguments. It is stated that "[r]egardless of the change in number of increments or the change in length of increments, the end result or length of time as [sic, a] whole is still the same" and thus the claimed subject matter is allegedly equivalent to Walker. Applicants submit that it is possible for two structures to not be equivalent to each other even if the results produced are similar. That is, even if $5 is provided for 5 minutes of play, the process recited by applicants is entirely different and therefore not equivalent. Consequently, while the end result may be similar when viewed by the user, the process of achieve that result may still be patentably different.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above application is in condition for allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested. In any event, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith to our Deposit Account No. 13-2855, under Order No. 29757/P-570.

Dated: April 3, 2007

Respectfully submitted,



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